

# Overseas Press Club Bulletin

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## OPC Mourns Lowell Thomas, Who Helped Save It



Lowell Thomas at work in the early '50s, visiting with natives in New Guinea... and at ease with professional colleagues at the OPC annual dinner of 1975. From left: John Chancellor, NBC; Gerald Long, Reuters; and Stan Swinton, AP.

(New Guinea picture courtesy N.Y. News)



### A Tribute

Some four decades ago the late **Jules Frantz** of the *Herald Tribune*, then the OPC treasurer, invited me to join the club and introduced me to **Lowell Thomas**.

Despite the many pressures on Lowell and his many commitments, he always maintained his interest in the club. A few days before Jules died, he wrote to him, "Whenever I think of the Overseas Press Club I can see you sitting there, telling the rest of us what we ought to do."

Over the years I have had several occasions to turn to Lowell for help and advice, both of which he gave unstintingly. His friendship, his warmth, his understanding of his fellow human beings and their needs, made him one of America's greatest reporters and one of our club's staunchest friends.

—Henry Gellermann

So long until tomorrow!

The sonorous sign-off that he used to close newscasts for 45 years echoed in obituaries and eulogies as journalists joined his many other friends in mourning the death of **Lowell Thomas**, fourth president of the Overseas Press Club.

Thomas, 89, died in his sleep of a heart attack August 29 at his home, Hammersley Hill, in the Quaker Hill section of Pawling, N.Y.

The obituaries recalled the familiar stories, which he had recorded himself in 50 books and a two-volume autobiography, of a celebrated world traveler, broadcaster, lecturer and author who became one of the world's best-known and beloved personalities.

He was born April 6, 1892, in Woodington, Ohio, son of Harry and Harriet Thomas. They moved soon to Cripple Creek, Colo., a gold camp on Pike's Peak, where the father practiced medicine.

Lowell graduated from the University of Denver, worked as a newspaper reporter and teacher, and began a lifelong career of travel and public speaking by producing an illustrated lecture on Alaska.

During World War I, he journeyed to the Middle East with an official historical mission and was catapulted to international attention by his romantic accounts of the campaign of British Col. T. E. Lawrence, "Lawrence of Arabia."

He began his nightly newscasts on CBS

radio in 1930, moved to NBC in 1932 and returned to CBS in 1947. He also narrated theater newsreels for Movietone News. He made the first TV newscast over NBC in 1939, but remained primarily on radio. His nightly program ended in 1976, but he stayed active, recording a syndicated radio series, "The Best Years," about the achievements of famous people in old age.

Thomas enjoyed another, less-known career as a successful businessman. He was a producer of Cinerama, the three-dimensional movie; a founder of Capital Cities Communications, owners of broadcasting stations and newspapers, and a director of a gold mining company in Cripple Creek.

Thomas rose to the top of OPC in characteristically meteoric style. He applied for membership October 28, 1941, and was elected president in October, 1942.

The writer of this report, then the AP man in Moscow, felt highly flattered to receive a letter from Thomas in 1942, inviting me to join the club. I did so immediately.

In retrospect, I realize now that I was only one of many who received such letters in one of the club's frequent membership drives, but, coming from him, I still considered it an honor.

Thomas received the OPC President's Award in 1975 as "an inspiration to us all." The citation by then-President Jack

(Continued on page 2)



**Raymond said:**

"It is estimated that more than 100 billion persons have heard Lowell Thomas's voice at one time or another, in person, broadcast, telecast and film — a greater audience than any man has enjoyed in history."

In 1978, when the club was in dire straits, with debts and legal actions amounting to almost \$400,000 and no home of its own, Thomas came to the rescue.

Advised of the situation by President **Henry Gellermann**, Thomas asked how he could help, and accepted Gellermann's suggestion that he serve as honorary chairman of the club's 40th anniversary dinner in the Waldorf-Astoria. At Thomas's invitation, leaders of the nation's greatest news organizations joined the honorary committee. The dinner was a success, professionally, socially and financially, and a turning-point in club history.

Thomas spent the last days of his life at home, working and calling on neighbors. His secretary, Electra Nicks, said that he recorded 15 five-minute radio programs in the last week.

The day before he died, he visited the Community Center in Pawling, and joked with a friend, John Brown, about their ages. Brown also was nearing 90.

Pawling Town Supervisor Warren Martin said Thomas had just built a new, smaller home near the Quaker Hill Golf Course after deeding the 35-room, red brick Georgian mansion, Hammersley Hill, to the University of Colorado.

Thomas had started purchasing the estate in 1925. He sold part of it to friends, including **Edward R. Murrow** and former Gov. Thomas E. Dewey. The town supervisor said the University of Colorado was negotiating sale of the rest of the property, about 1,000 acres, to movie producer Dino DiLaurentis.

There were two services for Thomas, reflecting widely varied facets of his career — the sophisticated city life of a New York clubman and the quiet country life of a Dutchess County squire.

About 800 persons filled the fashionable St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church on Park Avenue September 2 for a funeral service conducted by the rector, the Rev. Thomas D. Bowers. Robert Merrill, close friend of Thomas, sang "Nearer, My God, to Thee." Another friend, the Rev. Norman Vincent Peale, pastor of the Marble Collegiate Church, delivered the eulogy.

Peale described Thomas as "one of the most remarkable men of his time, or, indeed, of any time," and concluded: "It is not goodbye, but, in your own words, so long until tomorrow."

Former President Ford, Vice President Bush and Secretary of State Haig were among the mourners. OPC members present included **Henry Cassidy**, **Ken Gini**, **James Patterson**, **Dwight Sargent** and **Ansel Talbert**. William S. Paley,

## Pictures of Spain



**Gary Azon**

"Freedom of Expression" is what Gary Azon titles his exhibition of Catalan political murals and graffiti, which will be on view in the club lobby during October. "Catalunya," Mr. Azon tells us, "a province in northeastern Spain, is Spain's cultural womb of creativity. The images represent Spain's broad political spectrum from left to right . . . a fascinating but obscure aspect of Spanish life." The exhibition will be seen next spring in Barcelona. Mr. Azon is a freelancer currently living in New York. His photographs have been used by *The New York Times*, various magazines, a children's book and by UNICEF.

Walter Cronkite, Dan Rather, Charles Collingwood, Dallas Townsend and Douglas Edwards represented CBS.

About 400 persons crowded the simple, white Christ Church on Quaker Hill September 3 for a memorial service conducted by the minister, the Rev. Gordon G. Powell. The Christ Church Singers sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." The minister emeritus, the Rev. Ralph C. Lankler, friend and pastor of Thomas for 47 years, delivered the eulogy.

"It isn't necessary for us to honor Lowell Thomas," Lankler said. "It is necessary for us, in this place of worship, to give glory to God, to thank Him for raising up among us a person like Lowell Thomas."

Lankler also concluded with a reference to the broadcaster's sign-off. "If ever a man believed in tomorrow, it was Lowell Thomas."

After the service, the entire congregation was invited to lunch in the Quaker Hill Country Club barn.

Thomas was buried in the family plot beside Christ Church, on a hilltop overlooking Pawling valley. The gravesite was marked by a massive black boulder, bearing simply the inscription, "Thomas."

His first wife, Frances Ryan Thomas, was buried there in 1975. Thomas left his second wife, the former Marianna Munn, and a son, Lowell Thomas Jr., former lieutenant governor of Alaska.

—Henry Cassidy

## Letters

São Paulo—The Foreign Press Club visited Brazil's aircraft, space research and missile-making companies at São Jose dos Campos, about 60 miles north of São Paulo, on Aug. 24.

Embraer, as the light-aircraft maker is known, is exporting its twin-engine turboprop Bandeirantes all over the world, especially to small commuter airlines in the United States. Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais, the space research institute, calls itself the largest space research center in Latin America. Avibras Aerospacial, the missile-maker, is testing new models of offensive missiles.

Engesa, a maker of tanks and armored personnel carriers, was originally on the agenda for this trip, but withdrew its invitation at the last minute. As Engesa is the largest element in Brazil's exports of weapons, the cancellation was a particular disappointment.

Luiz Menezes, president of the Club and general manager of UPI for Brazil, said the 26 spaces made available for the club didn't meet the demand, with a number of members unable to make the trip after the allotment was filled on a first-come basis.

Menezes, who became president of the Rio de Janeiro-based club last April, succeeding out-going president Bruce Handler, AP's Chief of Bureau, has been energetically working to secure the club facilities in Rio, Brasília and São Paulo. Chagas Freitas, governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro, has promised facilities in Rio and documentation is expected soon on facilities in the capital, Brasília.

Menezes and Kotaro Horisaka, the club's vice president for São Paulo and Nihon Keizai Shimbun's staff correspondent, have been in contact with authorities here to arrange for facilities in the industrial city.

Frank Taylor, most recently staff writer with the *St. Petersburg Times*, has moved out of his hotel into permanent digs in São Paulo. Taylor, who's the new South America chief for *McGraw-Hill World News*, is no stranger to Brazil. Before being re-tooled for journalism by the Columbia School of Journalism and a couple of years on newspapers in Florida, Taylor worked as a coordinator on education development programs for the Inter-American Development Bank and Aid in Rio de Janeiro for the greater part of a decade.

Taylor succeeds *McGraw-Hill World News* veteran for South America, Ernest S. McCrary, who has been covering the continent for *World News* since going to Buenos Aires in 1967 under a scholarship program the Overseas Press Club had at the time.

McCrary, who moved the *World News* Bureau to São Paulo from Buenos Aires in



1976, said "After what seems like 150 years as a reporter, I decided that it's time to try the other side of the same business." He has formed two companies for this purpose. The newest is Empresa Internacional de Comunicações Ltda. (EmiCom), which is the exclusive agent in Brazil for *Business Week* advertising sales and circulation.

The other, Embranews Publicações Especializadas Ltda., was formed early last year to publish a bi-weekly newsletter called *Labor Trends* in English and *Tenencias do Trabalho* in the Portuguese version. *Labor Trends* has clearly become a success since its start-up a year and a half ago. Earlier this year Embranews began publishing under contract the *Latin American Energy Review*, a new quarterly magazine sponsored by the Energy and Economic Club of Rio de Janeiro.

Denis C. Beran, international publishing director for *Business Week*, was recently in Brazil making the rounds with McCrary in his EmiCom capacity. *BW* plans a November 2 special advertising supplement featuring exporting Brazilian technology.

—Bill Hieronymus

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CLEMSON, S.C. — Please send me another copy of the *BULLETIN* carrying a report with a picture of the war correspondents' reunion in Athens, O. Only a bit of my forehead appeared... so my name was not in the cutlines. I did attend the reunion and enjoyed it very much.

—Wright Bryan

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HYANNIS PORT, MA. — Your Story and picture on page 1, July 15 issue, was well-handled, though you should have recognized Wright Bryan's white mop behind John Groth's "workers cap." Also, may I add Hyannis Port is in Ma., not Me. since Me. split off from the Commonwealth some time ago, as Cape Cod should do.

—Larry G. Newman

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NEW YORK — **Hal Block** was referred to only twice as Harold Block. Once on his birth certificate and again in the *OPC Bulletin*, in his obituary. In between, Hal Block, who referred to himself as the "Laugh Correspondent of World War II," was a comedy writer for Fred Allen, Eddie Cantor, and "Hellzapoppin," and was one of the founders and original performers of "What's My Line?" with Dorothy Kilgallen, Arlene Francis, Bennet Cerf and John Daly.

RIP, Harold. Affectionately,

—Sol Zatt

**HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES?**

## Paul Svoboda

**Paul E. Svoboda**, director of the New York office, General Motors public relations staff, died August 12 in Ridgewood, N.J., where he had lived. He was 61. Burial was in Arlington National Cemetery.

A native of Omaha, Neb., and a 1942 graduate of the University of Nebraska, Paul spent the next three years as an officer in the Marine Corps, winning the Silver Star. He joined the UP in Chicago in 1945, serving as manager of the UP bureau in Springfield, Ill., and then in Detroit, where he became Michigan state manager and UP's automobile editor.

After serving in Chicago as UP's mid-west business representative, he joined GM's public relations staff in Detroit, coming to New York in 1965 and becoming director in New York in 1975.

Paul was a member of the International Motor Press Association as well as an OPCer, a member of the Detroit Press Club and a director of the Laymen's National Bible Committee.

Surviving are his wife, a son and daughter, two brothers and a sister.

## New Members

### ACTIVE RESIDENT

**Bruce W. Gray**; President and publisher, Atlantic Monthly

Sponsors: Henry Gellermann, Roy Rowan

**Evelyn Leopold**; General News Editor, North America, Reuters Ltd.

Sponsors: Henry Gellermann, Andrew L. Lluberes

**Richard Threlkeld**; Correspondent, CBS News

Sponsors: Henry Gellermann, Dwight E. Sargent

**Dorsey W. Woodson**; Director, Editorial Product Dev., McGraw-Hill

Sponsors: Ralph R. Schulz, M.R. Johnson

### ACTIVE NONRESIDENT

**Leonard Kaufman**; Freelance Photographer

Sponsors: Ben Greenwald, Dwight E. Sargent

**James C. Morin**; Editorial Cartoonist, Miami Herald

Sponsors: Henry Gellermann, Dwight E. Sargent

### ACTIVE OVERSEAS

**Mark Seibel**; Bureau Chief, Mexico City, Dallas Times Herald

Sponsors: Henry Gellermann, Dwight E. Sargent

## New Applications

### ACTIVE NONRESIDENT

**Frank W. Fitzmaurice**

**Betty G. Flood**

**Murray J. Gart**

**William H. Kurtis**

**Jim Mazzotta**

**Willard Ogan**

### ACTIVE OVERSEAS

**Steve McCurry**

### ASSOCIATE RESIDENT

**Edward M. Dickson**

### REINSTATED

### ACTIVE RESIDENT

**Peter V. Poor**

### ACTIVE NONRESIDENT

**Jesse Hill Ford**

## Margaret Parton

**Margaret Parton**, whose by-lined stories from India and from Japan were among the many she wrote as reporter and foreign correspondent for the late *New York Herald Tribune*, died August 9. She was 66 and had lived in Palisades, N.Y.

In addition to her newspaper work, Miss Parton was an associate editor of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, the author of numerous articles for various other magazines and of a number of books. She was co-author with Paul Dudley White of his autobiography, "My Life in Medicine."

## Trans Union Corporation

is an international transportation services company with offices around the world. It leases rail cars in the U.S., Canada, Mexico and the U.K., charts LASH and conventional ships and helps U.S. and foreign companies transport and market products abroad. The growth-oriented company also is active in water pollution control, condominium land development, credit service bureaus and finance leasing.

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## OPC BULLETIN

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## Who, What, Where

By ROSALIND MASSOW

**WELCOME BACK** ... **David B. Richardson**, based in Rome for seven years as general editor in Europe for *U.S. News and World Report*, returns to the States to begin new duties in Washington as national correspondent. A foreign newsman since World War II, Richardson served as resident correspondent in seven bureaus on five continents, first for *Time*, then *U.S. News*. He's been an OPC member for 34 years ... **Walter H. Diamond**, Overseas Press & Consultants, and wife Dorothy, recently returned from the Galapagos Islands where they were on assignment for the government of Ecuador ... Back from Reserve maneuvers at Fort Drum, **Jack Galub** reports he and newsman Al Slagle of the *Daily News*, and Josh Barbanell of the *New York Times*, never seemed to get to the "battles" on time. Jack admits he's better at meeting editorial deadlines. The 100-year history he penned for Diamond International Corp. is getting to its shareholders on time.

**NEW APPOINTMENTS** ... **Gil Busch**, formerly a New York public relations exec, has been named V.P. for marketing for Garcon Development Inc., a Titusville, Fla. construction company. Busch has been teaching advertising and marketing at Brevard Community College in Melbourne, Fla. ... Also news out of the Sunshine State is that **Mac Seligman's** firm, Creative Resources, Inc., has been named marketing, promotion and public relations reps for Guatemala's Tourist Commission.

**ARTICLES** ... Holes in her good cashmere sweaters led **Millicent Brower** to write a story on moths and other pests for the Home Section of the *New York Times*. To Brower's surprise, her research revealed that it wasn't moths that had such expensive taste, but the larvae of carpet beetles ... **Bunny Brewer** has a piece in the August issue of *Travel & Leisure* on New York newstands and another on Portugal's Pousadas in September's *Better Homes and Gardens*.

**DOUBLE AWARD** ... The clarinetist who won the Vada Kinman Oldfield Fine Arts scholarship that OPC'er **Col. Barney Oldfield** (Litton Industries) set up with his wife of 46 years also won a Rhodes Scholarship. Barney says that Roger Mastalir of the University of Nebraska may be one of the few Rhodes Scholars in music. When Mastalir gets to Oxford this October he'll find that Col. Oldfield also set up a BBC audition for him.

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**David R. Fluhrer** has become Manager, External Communications for Celanese Corporation. He has left *Newsweek*, where he served as director of corporate information.

OPC'er **Victor Lasky** was all smiles recently when he read in The New York Times Book Review that his story of Henry Ford II, "Never Complain, Never Explain," was edging its way onto their Best Seller list. The book is a fast-reading account of the life, loves and labors of one of the most rambunctious of our current tycoons. Even a fall into one of Boston's potholes — which we thought a New York City exclusive — failed to daunt Victor, although it laid him up in hospital for a couple of weeks. He's back home in Washington, still smiling.

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**Robert J. Stone** has left McGraw-Edison to become VP in charge of media relations at the Chicago office of Hill & Knowlton ... **John E. Sattler**, retired from Ford Motor and on his own, will direct efforts of International PR Assn to improve knowledge of public relations the world over ...

**Jerry Katz**, assistant financial editor of the *New York News*, recuperating at home from recent heart operation ... **David Horowitz**, who does the consumer "Fight Back!" program for NBC Radio, signed with Des Moines Register & Tribune Syndicate for a weekly column ... "Export is good business," says **Peter F. Greene** in a new handbook intended to make the business easy to understand. Into it he has put 30 years of experience in the field world-wide, 14 of them as editor and publisher of Dun & Bradstreet's "Exporters Encyclopedia." Publisher is Market Entry, New York.

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**William Zimmerman** has launched a unique venture as a small publisher to demonstrate how a newspaperman can teach people how to use journalistic skills in a practical way.

Busy as he is with his job as managing editor of *American Banker*, the New York-based financial daily, Zimmerman has written and published on his own a new book "Instant Oral Biographies." It

## Up-and-Coming

**Friday, Sept. 25, 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.** Twilight jazz "Salute to Trombonist Vic Dickenson." Admission: \$4.00. Seating first-come. No reservations.

**Friday, Oct. 2, 5:30 p.m.** Reunion dinner of United Press veterans from the wartime '40s, Bogert Room. Former Unipressers from Europe and West Coast will be here. Details: Rob Roy Buckingham, 556-1019, or Harriet Stanton, 972-1070.

teaches youngsters and grownups how to interview relatives and friends and capture on tape their special life stories, memories and traditions. It stems from his own experience for 20 years as a newsman and from his belief "that we all have stories worth telling, sharing and preserving."

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A trio of wine experts huddled not too long ago at the club ... **Mike Verity**, Overseas Export Manager of the Australian Wine Board, Adelaide, was guest of club wine experts **Sol Zatt** and **George McGann**.

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**Leo D. Hochstetter** has broadened his PR enterprise in Washington by teaming up with Malcolm Hurlston in London to form Hurlston and Hochstetter. Hurlston is a one-time British reporter. Leo was a foreign correspondent for the one-time *Washington Herald*.

## PLACEMENT

**WANTED:** Freelance correspondents to cover food service technology world-wide for international monthly magazine serving engineers, architects and designers. Emphasis on kitchen planning and design. Rates around \$250 for 1,000 words. Reply to John Saulnier, Editor, Food Service Technology International, 757 Third Ave., New York, NY 10017. Phone: (212) 888-4347.

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